

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LILONG 00520 101238Z

ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1776

C O N F I D E N T I A L LILONGWE 0520

STADIS//////////

FOR ASST SECRETARY MOOSE FROM STEVENSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, MI, US

SUBJ: PRESIDENT BANDA'S PRIVATE VISIT TO THE U.S.

REF: STATE 091014; STATE 83528; LILONGWE 519

1. I REALIZE FROM COMMENTS MADE BY MALAWI DESK THAT AF HAS HAD DIFFICULTY IN GETTING ITS CHIEF EXECUTIVES IN TO SEE THE PRESIDENT AND I CAN WELL UNDERSTAND YOUR NEED TO WEIGH PRIORITIES. I WOULD ONLY LIKE TO BE CERTAIN THAT IN ADDITION TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS POINTS WHICH IS COMPLETELY VALID, (NOTE: JUST LAST WEEK I LEARNED THAT GOM IS CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS TO SEE THAT JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES ARE GIVEN LAND AND NOT MOLESTED AND ALL IS CALM ON THAT FRONT. ALSO, BANDA HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE ELECTIONS THIS YEAR FOR PARLIAMENT WILL BE BY SECRET BALLOT AND ONE MINISTER WHOM I KNOW BELIEVES HE WILL LOSE HIS SEAT AS A RESULT.) THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS WHICH I FEEL ARE ALSO PERTINENT. NAMELY,
(1) BANDA IS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL LEADERS OF THE BLACK INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IN AFRICA, A CONTEMPORARY OF KENYATTA, KWAME NKRUMAH, AZIKIWE AND OTHERS AND WHEN LIVING IN LONDON HELPED MANY OF THEM FROM HIS OWN FUNDS,
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INCLUDING NYERERE AND KAUNDA.

(2) MALAWI HAS ONE OF THE BEST IF NOT THE BEST RECORD OF ALL THE BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN SUPPORTING THE U.S. POSITION AT THE UNGA AND IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND FORA.

(3) HE HAS COURAGEOUSLY INSISTED THAT THE BEST WAY TO RESOLVE THE RACIAL PROBLEMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA IS

THROUGH PEACEFUL CONTACT AND DIALOGUE AND HAS CREATED A REASONABLY SUCCESSFUL MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY IN MALAWI.

(4) HE WAS RECEIVED TWICE BY PRESIDENT KENNEDY (WHOSE MEMORY HE REVERES) AND BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND, DESPITE ANY EXPLANATIONS AND HIS EXPRESSED AWARENESS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HEAVY SCHEDULE, HE WILL BE HURT AND DISAPPOINTED IF HE CANNOT SEE HIM NO MATTER HOW BRIEFLY.

(5) WITH REASON HE FEELS ESPECIALLY CLOSE TO THE U.S. BECAUSE OF HIS 12 YEARS RESIDENCE IN OUR COUNTRY (HIGH SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY AND MEDICAL SCHOOL).

(6) CONTRARY TO WHAT SOME OF HIS CRITICS SAY, HE DOES NOT KOW-TOW IN ANY WAY TO SOUTH AFRICA BUT MAINTAINS A DIGNIFIED RELATIONSHIP. MOREOVER, THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE IN MALAWI IS NOT

UNUSUAL OR SIGNIFICANT.

(7) HE RUNS HIS COUNTRY AUTOCRATICALLY BUT WITH HONESTY AND EFFICIENCY--THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO GRAFT AND CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS SPENT AS IT IS SUPPOSED TO BE.

(8) THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER EXPECTS WITHOUT QUESTION THAT BANDA WILL BE RECEIVED BY PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN, ALTHOUGH HIS VISIT TO GREAT BRITAIN IS ALSO PRIVATE.

2. IN THE EVENT YOU HAVE ALREADY WEIGHTED THESE FACTORS AND YOUR DECISION STANDS, IT SEEMS TO ME IT WOULD BE BEST
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NOT TO TELL BANDA NOW BUT RATHER AFTER THE OTHER VISITS HAVE BEEN ARRANGED AND IT MIGHT THEN SEEM MORE CONVINCING TO HIM THAT WE HAVE MADE A REAL EFFORT. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD HE UNDERSTAND A NEGATIVE DECISION IN TERMS OF STATE DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES.
STEVENSON

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